



# *Wishes Can't Wait...*

## *Because, Wishes Matter!*

Make-A-Wish® Alaska and Washington's mission is simple and clear. With the generous support of our donors like you and in partnership with our community, we do one thing: grant the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy. But you might wonder what does that really mean? What is the lasting impact of a wish?

### *You help wish kids rise above their illnesses*

A life-threatening diagnosis is devastating for wish kids and their families. Wishes are a way to combat that. The benefits of a wish are tangible. For some, a wish is incentive to comply with their treatments so they can get healthy enough to experience their wish. For others, it's a distraction and something positive to look forward to.

When you invest in the Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington mission, you do even more than bring joy to critically ill children. You also give them an edge on conquering their illnesses. Researchers studied the effects of wish granting on children with cancer and found significant improvements in hope, positive emotions, health-related quality of life and anxiety. A wish can be a game-changer for seriously ill children and their families and that's why wishes can't wait.

### *Why are wishes important?*

Because research shows that wishes matter:

- Wish kids experience improved mental and emotional health and improved physical health and strength.
- Wish parents report that the shared wish experience can help repair and strengthen family relationships that become strained by the stresses of battling life-threatening medical conditions.
- Wishes give kids the courage to pursue their dreams - dreams they believed were too difficult or impossible to achieve before their wish experience.

### *We need your help*

In the past four years, our waiting list has doubled. Right now, more than 500 kids are waiting for a wish and that's just the beginning. One in five kids is not being referred to our program because they don't know about us. We need you more than ever so we can reach our vision to grant a wish to every eligible child by 2020.

### ***Wishes matter as much now, as they did then***

Founded in 1986, the people who started our local chapter of Make-A-Wish weren't doctors, and they couldn't prescribe medication or treatments. But, they found a way to lift the optimism and determination of critically ill children, and since then, thousands of supporters like you have continued their work. With your help and support, we have gone from granting six wishes that first year to now granting more than 6,200 children in 30 years.

Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington is an independent chapter of Make-A-Wish®, the premier wish-granting organization for children that spans the globe. Children with life-threatening medical conditions that are progressive, malignant or degenerative, who have reached the age of 2½ and are younger than 18 at the time of referral are eligible to receive wishes.

Although it has become one of the world's most well-known charities, Make-A-Wish's success is largely because of its grassroots support. In Alaska and Washington, more than 600 volunteers work to make these wishes come true. This year, we will rely on the support of those volunteers and our community to grant 332 wishes throughout our territory.

### ***1 in 5 local children won't receive a wish***

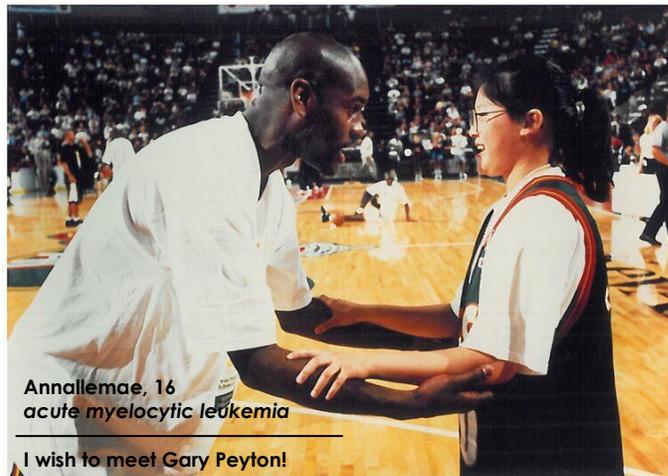


Aiden, 7  
congenital cardiac condition  
I wish to go to a Dude Ranch!

Despite our well-known name, Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington does not have all the resources it needs to grant the wishes of eligible children in our local communities. According to our research, right now about 22 percent of all eligible children won't receive a wish. We know the power of this work, and every child suffering with a life-threatening medical condition deserves to experience the renewal and transformational possibilities that only a wish can bring.

### ***You make a difference***

You are the key to Make-A-Wish meeting the opportunities that lie ahead. If you stand with us, every eligible child can receive the renewal of a wish experience. And, you'll feel incredible knowing that you helped to make that difference. Your investment in our initiative: Wishes Can't Wait can help ensure a wish for each child. This fundraising initiative is a major challenge for our chapter, but we know we can count on generous supporters like you to help us make these wishes come true.



Annallemae, 16  
acute myelocytic leukemia  
I wish to meet Gary Peyton!

With your investment in our initiative: ***Wishes Can't Wait***, in our community and in our children, we will provide life-changing and transformational Wishes to ***ALL*** eligible children in Alaska and Washington today, tomorrow and *always*.

### ***Wishes are part of patient care***

Referral source, Dr. Doug Hawkins, Associate Division Chief, Hematology/Oncology at Seattle Children's Hospital has treated more than 300 wish children and he knows that wishes play a powerful role in patient care.

“

*We have so much we can do medically to take care of medical problems, to treat the side effects. But we don't really have a treatment for the toxicity of the soul, the things that happen that make people so discouraged or fatigued or run down. And that's what Make-A-Wish can do. A wish is something that transcends a medical illness and allows people to plan for something well outside of the walls of the hospital or the next clinic visit. It's a way to treat something that we can't treat with medicine, and that's what makes it so important.”*

*Dr. Doug Hawkins, Seattle Children's Hospital*

### ***Wish kids need you***

When a child is diagnosed with a life-threatening medical condition, their world suddenly collapses. Once filled with school and friends, their new normal is a constant string of doctor appointments, tests, surgical procedures and hospital stays. They are often isolated from family and friends. Their parents face anxiety and severe financial burdens. Often, one parent has to quit a job to care for their ill child. These hardships enter at diagnosis, escalate during treatment and, routinely, continue beyond the last procedure. Many are faced with lifelong consequences from medications, rehabilitation and psychological trauma that serve as a reminder of the threat that once was and in some cases, still is.

So, imagine the joy, elation and gratitude that children and families experience when they receive a wish. “We can offer the kids life-saving therapies, but Make-A-Wish gives them a little bit of their life back,” said Dr. Sangeeta Hingorani, pediatric nephrologist at Seattle Children's Hospital and Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington trustee alumna.

In a world that has become chaotic and uncontrollable for them, Make-A-Wish returns some measure of control and order to their lives, giving children the ability to decide for themselves their heartfelt wish. A wish offers a sense of normalcy where one no longer exists. This gift is unparalleled and unique to Make-A-Wish. A wish is something that no medicine, no doctors and no nurses can provide. Every child and family suffering from a life-threatening diagnosis deserves the hope, strength and joy that come from a wish. We believe that Make-A-Wish is part of total patient care.

### ***The power of a wish is truly transformative and long-lasting***

The unprecedented power of a wish sparks excitement leading up to a wish and provides lasting memories to tap into during the difficult days that follow. Critically ill kids who are emotionally



healthy are more likely to overcome their medical conditions, and you can stand with other caring people to restore their optimism and joy.

The positive mental, emotional and physical impact that wishes have on kids and their families is real and documented. Make-A-Wish® America commissioned a national survey to gain a better understanding of the effects of a wish come true. The results were astounding:

- 97 percent of adult former wish kids and their families say they experienced improved mental and emotional health.
- 96 percent of health professionals observe increases in wish children's emotional health.
- 98 percent of parents felt the wish gave them the opportunity to be a normal family again.

A Wish is not simply a “nicety,” it is an absolute “necessity.” Wishes matter. They make a difference for the children and adults, alike.

### ***Your dollars are well spent***

Ours is a carefully-managed organization. All wishes are 100 percent funded through a combination of private support and creativity. We receive no government funding. Much of our work is carried out by nearly 700 volunteers and more than \$2 million of our annual support comes in the form of contributed goods and services. For every \$1 spent granting wishes, we receive another \$1.50 of in-kind goods and services. Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington is proud to have one of the highest in-kind to cash ratios – on average 60% in-kind to 40% cash – in the entire Make-A-Wish enterprise.

Despite all of these grassroots efforts, the average cash cost of a wish is about \$5,000 and that does not include the in-kind donations our staff and volunteers work tirelessly to secure for our wishes. We receive a broad base of support from individuals, corporations, small businesses, family foundations, students, clubs and organizations throughout the states of Alaska and Washington.

With your investment in Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington, the deserving children in our communities who are battling life-threatening illness will be able to look forward to their future with excitement instead of fear. For these children, their families and our community, your support will make profound and lasting changes – for good as Dr. Jeff Beck of Seattle Children's Hospital states.

“

*A wish experience goes to the essence of caring holistically for a young person facing a serious and life-threatening illness...The opportunity to bring a child's wish to life offers the individual and their family the chance to create a lasting legacy. These memories are important for healing regardless of the clinical outcome.”*

*Dr. Jeff Beck, Seattle Children's Hospital.*

Every wish granted is because of people like you who care, whether by donating, volunteering, referring children or becoming a corporate sponsor. We thank you for your support and urge you to inspire others by generously contributing to our ***Wishes Can't Wait*** initiative. You can help us create magic, make memories and enrich the lives of children and their families with hope, strength and joy. Wishes matter. ***Wishes Can't Wait!***